DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 208 316 CG 015 489

TITLE	A Guide to School and Community Action.
INSTITUTION	California State Dept. of Education, Sacramento.
PUB DATE	81
NOTE	33p.
AVAILABLE FROM	California State Dept. of Education, Publication Sales, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95802 ($1.75).
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Adolescents; Child Welfare; *Community Action; *Local Issues; *Needs Assessment; Planning; Problem Solving; Program Evaluation; *Program Implementation; *School Community Relationship; *Youth Problems

ABSTRACT

This booklet is a school and community action guide designed to assist local communities in the identification of needs, exploration of alternatives, and implementation and evaluation programs to address issues affecting children and youth. The action guide is presented as a four-step process of: (1) conducting a needs assessment; (2) organizing the community; (3) developing an action plan; and (4) implementing and evaluating the plan. The materials are presented in a workbook format, with checklists and spaces for recording information. Appendix A provides an example of the implementation process, i.e., showing how a community group might conduct a needs assessment in response to the problem of early teenage pregnancy. Appendix B considers the committee approach to problem solving and discusses committee size, selection, and operation, along with the chairman's role and suggestions for agendas, minute-taking, and reporting. The final appendix provides a practical guide for coalition building. (Author/NRB)

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A Guide to School and Community Action

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- ☑ 4. Implementing & Evaluating

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Developed cooperatively by the
California Congress of Parents, Teachers, and Students, Inc.
and the California State Department of Education
Wilson Riles, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Sacramento, 1981

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A Guide to School and Community Action

A School and Community Action Guide Designed to Assist Local Communities to Identify Their Needs, Explore Alternatives, and Establish and Evaluate Programs to Address Issues Affecting Children and Youth That Are of General Community Concern

CG 015489

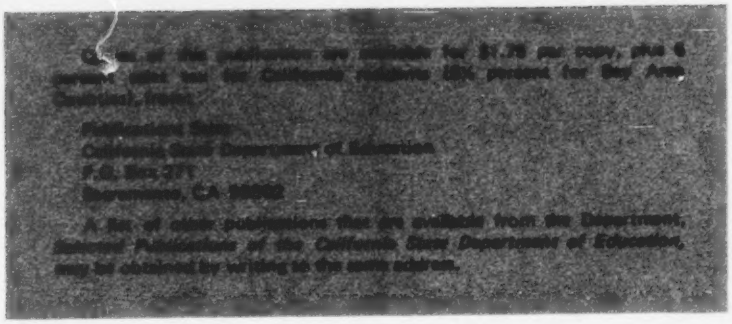
$1.75

This document was developed cooperatively by the California Congress of Parents, Teachers, and Students, Inc., and the California State Department of Education. The document was prepared for photo-offset production by the Bureau of Publications, California State Department of Education, and was published by the Department, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814.

Printed by the Office of State Printing
and distributed under the provisions
of the Library Distribution Act

1981

Printed on recycled paper



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A Message from Your Superintendent

Today's students are faced daily with a myriad of personal and social concerns unknown to other generations. One example is the area of early teenage pregnancies. When this occurs, it sometimes creates lifelong problems for the baby, parents, and society in general. I believe that education, whether it be provided by the schools, parents, churches, or other agencies, can have a positive influence to help students deal with these kinds of problems. It also appears to me that parents should play a key role in the educational process.

For this reason, I asked the California Congress of Parents, Teachers, and Students to work cooperatively with the California State Department of Education in the development of a school and community action guide that would show members of the community how they could participate in the educational process and have their views considered. I can think of no better way to involve entire communities in decisions about reducing problems associated with early teenage pregnancies than through the PTA. No other civic organization has the strength of family, community, and school involvement.

I personally feel that the PTA has developed an excellent guide that can be used by community members to help students meet their personal challenges.

I strongly believe that the best programs to assist our students should be developed *locally* to deal with *local* problems in the light of *local* values. However, I do offer my personal support, as well as that of my staff, to assist communities if they need assistance in developing educational programs to help our students solve their problems.

Superintendent of Public Instruction

The Role of the PTA

The first concerns of the California State PTA have always been the welfare of the child and the strengthening of the family unit. The family is the first and most fundamental influence on children's health, education, and spiritual growth. PTA believes the schools, the church, and other institutions have important roles to play in building upon and extending this early parental influence.

For this reason, the California State PTA accepted Wilson Riles' invitation to develop a school and community action guide to assist local communities in planning local programs to address local concerns.[1] While the concern in one community might be early teenage pregnancy, in another community it might be alcohol and drug abuse, school violence and vandalism, or school discipline.

Because each community is unique, it is clear that no single approach to resolve a given community problem would suit all communities. Every community has within itself the people and resources to solve problems and make improvements within that community. When a community is able to identify a problem that needs to be solved, and it is within the realm of the skills, resources, and power available, then that community is well on the way to solving its problem. The steps involved start with researching the statistics in the community to determine whether or not the identified concern is really a problem. Second, it involves determining what the community's perception about the problem is and what might be involved in an action program. The former might be thought of as the facts which substantiate the need; the latter, as the perspective or value system within which those facts take on meaning and are translated into action.

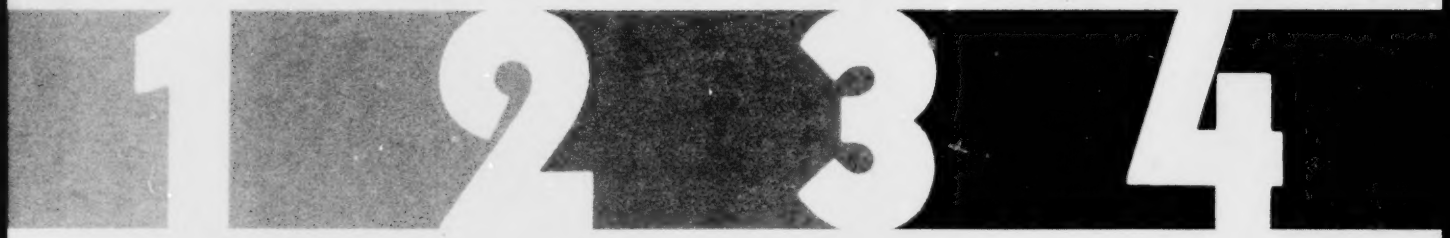
If all the problems encountered cannot be solved, that is normal and to be expected. A great service can be provided to the community by pointing out areas which need further study and work. The tasks undertaken depend on the resources available in the community and the time frame for action.

The mission of the PTAs and PTSAs (Parent-Teacher-Student Associations) in California is to represent all children and youth by identifying their needs; by advocating those needs to schools and other agencies and organizations that affect youth; and by seeking to effect the action necessary to meet those needs. The PTA is in the unique position of focusing on the *total* child; it can bring together all elements of the school and community that have a responsibility for the well-being of young people for a *total* approach to a community concern.

This school and community action guide is developed in such a way that its use is not limited to organized PTA groups. It is designed to bring together an alliance of diverse individuals and representatives from groups to take joint action on a shared concern, recognizing that different capabilities and resources are required to meet a community need. To be effective, there should be a broad cross section of parents, teachers, students, administrators, and other community people. Students possess a special perspective on what is happening in their schools and communities and are especially well qualified to ascertain how their educational experiences can be improved. Since the parents and students know what they want from the schools and the community, it is important to bring them together with the professionals who know the techniques for getting things done. It must be recognized that neither parent, teacher, student, nor agency representative should be a silent partner; each should expect to know what is happening, be free to express opinions, be ready to exchange information and ideas in search of support for common goals—to focus not on what is best for the group, but instead on what is best for children and youth.

The process offered by this guide can be used to bring together a community's people, resources, knowledge, and energy to solve any problem of concern to that community.

[1] A *community* can be designated as a school attendance area, a school district, city, county, or any other area as perceived by the group.



Conducting a Needs Assessment of the School and Community

Organizing the Community

Developing an Action Plan

Implementing and Evaluating the Plan of Action

Introduction to the Action Process

This *Guide to School and Community Action* illustrates how individuals and groups in local communities can come together to study existing problems by identifying local needs; how to develop a program and implement a plan of action to meet those needs; and how to evaluate and redesign the plan if necessary. Suggestions are offered for community organization and action which might—in some form—work for your community.

The guide is presented in four steps:

1. Conducting a Needs Assessment of the School and Community
2. Organizing the Community
3. Developing an Action Plan
4. Implementing and Evaluating the Plan of Action

To make it easier for groups to work through these steps together, the material is presented in a workbook format. Checklists and spaces for recording information are provided to allow for maximum flexibility. Pages from the guide may be duplicated as needed for group members, or additional copies of the guide may be ordered (see page ii). If there is insufficient writing space on the following pages, additional sheets can be inserted.

Appendix A, starting on page 16, is an example of how the process can be implemented. It shows how a community group might follow the first of the four steps, conducting a needs assessment, in response to one of today's most pressing health and socioeconomic problems, early teenage pregnancy.

The purpose of this guide and the example given in the appendix is to provide an impetus for bringing together the forces that most influence our young people—the home, the school, and the community—for the purpose of resolving community concerns.

Conducting a Needs Assessment of the School and Community

Developing a needs assessment of the school and the community should be the first step in exploring a community concern. This assessment can be conducted by the PTA or by any concerned group of parents, teachers, students, religious leaders, or other interested members of the community. An example of identifying a need may be found in Appendix A.

Purpose

Purpose for Conducting a Needs Assessment

- To determine if an identified concern is truly a problem that should be dealt with through broad-based community action

Procedures

Procedures for Conducting a Needs Assessment

1. Determine the extent of the problem.

	Yes	No
a. Is there a problem?	☐	☐
Is it widespread?	☐	☐
Is the community at large affected by this problem?	☐	☐

b. Who is affected by the problem?

What individuals?_____

In what ways?_____

What groups?_____

In what ways?_____

c. What are the contributing causes of the problem?

d. Do any existing school and community programs deal with this problem? Yes ☐ No ☐

Which ones? _____

_____

_____

e. What types of changes could cause things to be different:

Beliefs? _____

_____

Attitudes? _____

_____

Circumstances? _____

_____

Laws? _____

_____

Time? _____

_____

Money? _____

_____

Other resources? _____

_____

2. Survey appropriate community agencies to obtain statistics on the problem: Done ☐

	Surveyed
Private and church-related programs	☐
School personnel	☐
Major employers	☐
Chamber of commerce	☐
Local, county, state, and federal departments of health, education, probation, and social services	☐
Libraries	☐
Volunteer agencies	☐
Community and state colleges and universities	☐
Community organizations (PTA, League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women [AAUW], etc.)	☐
Professional agency representatives	☐
Community phone information services and other sources that may be appropriate	☐
Others (Identify)	☐

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

In gathering information, it is extremely important to give potential sources of information a clear explanation of the research and how the information will be used. Document how and why the survey was taken, include a copy of the questions, tally the results that show any activity, and send a copy of the findings to those surveyed. This courtesy will compensate those surveyed for their cooperation, raise the level of awareness within the community, and let people know that they participated in a worthwhile project.

Statistics and information gained from the needs assessment will determine whether or not there is a basis for taking action. If there is no need, it is best not to invest time and money. If, however, the needs assessment indicates a problem exists, the information gathered will be a basis, with any necessary additional research, for the formation of a community action plan.

3. Prepare a needs assessment findings report. It should contain: Done

   a. Reason for study ☐

   _____

   _____

   b. Statistics obtained (Note the numbers by age, socioeconomic status, racial-ethnic background, or religious affiliation.) ☐

   _____

   _____

   _____

   c. Professional resource people who were interviewed during the needs assessment ☐

   _____

   _____

   _____

   d. Other resources used, such as films, periodicals, books, and surveys ☐

   _____

   _____

   _____

Final Check

Final Check in Conducting a Needs Asssment

	Yes	No
• Based on the needs assessment findings, does a problem exist that requires broad based community action?	☐	☐

Organizing the Community

Purposes

The Purposes for Organizing the Community

- To explore alternative solutions to the problem(s) indicated by the needs assessment findings
- To open informal communication among various community segments
- To share information and resources and avoid duplication of efforts
- To ensure that program improvements and changes are relevant to the entire community

Procedures

Procedures for Organizing the Community

Done

1. Determine who should convene the initial meeting (probably the PTA or informal group which completed the needs assessment). If applicable, involve appropriate school administrators. ☐

Yes No

2. Consider the probable community response:
   a. Is the political climate receptive to improvements in this area? ☐ ☐
   b. Have there been previous efforts? ☐ ☐
   c. What is the general community's attitude toward this problem?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

   d. Where in any existing framework will this steering committee fit?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Identify the people to be involved. Make sure that the group is well balanced and that no special interests dominate.

	Identified
Parents of preschool and school-aged children	☐
Teachers	☐
Students	☐
School administrators	☐
School board members	☐
The media	☐
Professionals in the particular field, such as health, welfare, probation, and social services	☐
Key people from both public and private agencies that serve children and families	☐
Business and civic leaders	☐
Appointed or elected city, county, or state officials	☐
Representatives from the religious community	☐
Community volunteers and other interested persons	☐

In determining which individuals and groups should be involved, consider (1) the kind of work that needs to be done; (2) the kind of influence, including political influence, and leadership the effort needs; and (3) the cost and mechanics of getting things done.

4. Set specifics of initial meeting:

Date _____

Time _____

Place _____

5. Prepare and send letters of invitation to potential members (see procedure 3).

a. Include the following in letters:

	Included
(1) Purpose of meeting	☐
(2) Invitation to participate	☐
(3) Invitation to comment (two or three minutes) on the problem from person's own perspectives	☐
(4) Directions to meeting place as well as time and date	☐
(5) Deadline for response to the invitation and the address and telephone number of the person to whom the response should be directed	☐

b. Send the following materials with the letter:

	Sent
(1) Copy of needs assessment findings	☐
(2) Preliminary agenda for the meeting, with the request that additional agenda items be submitted	☐
(3) List of invited participants, with request for names of additional group members	☐

6. Establish meeting agenda:

Done

a. Appoint a secretary pro tem to keep a record of proceedings and to ensure follow-up on each item discussed. ☐

_____

b. Review needs assessment findings. ☐

c. Identify other issues to be covered. ☐

_____

_____

d. Consider names of additional group members, and designate someone to contact them. ☐

Potential group member	Contact person
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. At the first meeting, after thorough discussion, take the following steps:

Step taken

a. Select temporary chairperson and secretary for the group. ☐

Chairperson _____

Secretary _____

b. Identify some action steps to get activities started. ☐

_____

_____

_____

_____

c. Appoint subcommittees to carry out identified action steps, including a committee to investigate any needed funding. ☐

_____

_____

d. Use as valuable resources the agencies surveyed during needs assessment:

Used

- Private and church-related programs ☐
- School personnel ☐
- Major employers ☐
- Chamber of commerce ☐
- Local, county, state, and federal departments of health, education, probation, and social services ☐
- Libraries ☐
- Volunteer agencies ☐
- Community and state colleges and universities ☐
- Community organizations (PTA, League of Women Voters, AAUW, etc.) ☐
- Professional agency representatives ☐
- Community phone information services and other sources that may be appropriate ☐

For operation of committees, refer to Appendix B, "The Question Is on Committees."

Done

e. Set a time for subcommittees to report back to entire group. ☐

_____

f. Obtain approval and backing from their membership by organizational representatives, preferably in writing. ☐

g. If representatives from elected or appointed government bodies (e.g., local school board, city council, board of supervisors, juvenile justice commission, park and recreation commission, youth commission) are not serving on committee, devise a method for keeping these groups informed. ☐

h. Set specifics for next meeting. ☐

Date _____

Time _____

Place _____

i. Send minutes to all group members prior to next meeting. ☐

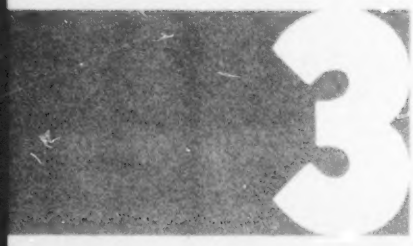
At this point, the group may wish to consider forming a coalition. For further information on coalition building, refer to Appendix C.

A group can capitalize on the rich resources of its members and create a healthy group climate by respecting differences of opinion and maintaining a willingness to consider individual contributions. By recognizing that each individual has a unique contribution to make to the group, the group can then turn its full energies to completing its tasks.

Final Check

Final Check for Organizing the Community

	Yes	No
• Have alternative solutions to the problems been identified and explored?	☐	☐
• Have all segments of the community been reached?	☐	☐
• Has the political climate of the community been considered?	☐	☐



Developing an Action Plan

Purpose

Purpose for Developing an Action Plan

- To formulate recommendations to deal effectively with the problem based on the facts and information obtained

Procedures

Procedures for Developing an Action Plan

1. Subcommittees report findings.

   Is additional research needed? Yes ☐ No ☐

   Note: It should be understood that it may take several meetings and some time may elapse before the completing of the subcommittees' reports.

   When committee reports are presented, each member of the group can help keep discussion purposeful and productive by:

   a. Monitoring the discussion and informing the group when it strays from topic at hand

   b. Asking people to clarify what is being discussed in order to be sure that everyone understands one another

   c. Drawing all participants into the discussion by frequently soliciting opinions and information from everyone concerned (Don't let one or two persons dominate the meeting.)

2. Determine techniques to be used when making decisions:

   a. **Consensus seeking.** This system enables a group to come to agreement in such a way that there are no losers. Differences of opinion are natural and expected. Disagreements can help the group decision because, with a wide range of information, there is a greater chance that the group will agree upon acceptable solutions. Used ☐

   The following suggestions may be helpful to groups following the consensus technique:

   (1) Avoid arguing with members' judgments. Each position should be presented as clearly as possible, but each member should listen to other members' reactions and consider the logic before pressing his or her point. Be suspicious when agreement comes too quickly and easily.

   (2) Do not assume that someone must win and someone must lose when discussion reaches a stalemate. Instead, look for the next most acceptable alternative for all. Keep the discussion focused on what can be agreed upon, even if it is only one small point.

   When one or two members simply cannot agree with the group after a reasonable period of time has elapsed, a minority report based on their logic should be presented.

Used

b. **Brainstorming.** Persons in a group put forth as many ideas as possible. After the group has generated a list of alternatives, the group goes over the list and applies critical and careful judgment to reach consensus about the listed alternatives. ☐

A brainstorming session is a time of suspended judgment when nobody says "No" or "It will never work."

c. **Force-field analysis.** This method identifies conditions that support attainment of the goal and those that block its attainment. The problem is the gap between what is and what is desired. The conditions that preclude reaching the goal are called blocking forces. The supporting forces are the positive factors which move the group closer toward the goal. ☐

Use the following steps to conduct a force-field analysis:

(1) Clearly state the goal or desired situation.
(2) Identify the situation "as it is."
(3) Using brainstorming techniques, identify the forces that support goal attainment.
(4) In the same way, list the forces which prevent you from changing the present situation.
(5) Rearrange the blocking forces in order of significance.
(6) Using brainstorming techniques again, suggest possible solutions to this prioritized list of obstacles (search for alternatives).
(7) Create an action plan based on the solutions generated (plan for action).

Done

3. Based on findings, identify mutual concerns and establish goals and objectives that are solvable. ☐

Goals:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Objectives:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

***A goal** describes a state of being, something you want to happen.*

***An objective** describes behaviors or actions which must take place before that goal can be achieved.*

A well written objective contains detailed information. It tells you:

***Who** will do it.*
***What** they will do.*
***Why** they will do it.*
***When** they will do it.*
***Where** and **how** can also enter into the description of the action in some objectives.*

*Achievement of a **goal** often requires the completion of several **objectives**.*

Done

4. List under the goal all the behaviors or actions required to make that desired thing happen. ☐

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Develop a mutually agreed upon course of action that could be implemented in part or in whole. ☐

_____
_____
_____
_____

Representatives from organizations take the plan of action to their respective organizations for approval. ☐

6. Establish a time frame, with tasks that need to be done listed in chronological order. ☐

Task	Completion time
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Record the action plan with clear responsibilities for its components. ☐

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Plans may be changed as data about implementation of the plan are collected. At every junction, however, agreements and responsibilities should be clearly understood, and any changes should be negotiated and communicated with everyone concerned. Remember that any participating organization must approve changes.

Done

7. Develop a method of evaluation as a necessary part of the action plan. The evaluation will vary, depending on the goals and objectives set by the group. It should include the following procedures: ☐

   a. Testing before and after the action to measure change in such things as attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge
   b. Describing in advance the conditions that would cause satisfaction, and then seeing how many of these conditions exist at the end of the program
   c. Keeping track of what was done to see how much of what was planned was accomplished

Final Check

Final Check for Developing a Plan of Action

	Yes	No
• Based on the findings and information obtained, has a plan for action been developed to meet the agreed upon goals and objectives?	☐	☐
• Did most or all members of the group participate?	☐	☐
• Are all committee members fully aware of their responsibilities?	☐	☐
• Were there any surprises?	☐	☐

4 Implementing and Evaluating the Plan of Action

Purposes

The Purposes for Implementing and Evaluating the Plan

- To ensure that the action plan and its recommendations are being considered and enacted
- To make modifications to the plan if evaluation data indicate they are needed

Procedures

Procedures for Implementing and Evaluating the Plan

1. Verify support of organizations involved.

	Yes	No
a. Are the memberships of the organizations participating in the group aware of and supportive of the action plan?	☐	☐
b. Has this support been indicated by appropriate letters or resolutions of support?	☐	☐

2. Be sure each individual or organizational representative is prepared to begin carrying out his or her assigned responsibilities for implementing the action plan in as efficient and timely a manner as possible. Done ☐

Tasks to be completed	Member(s) responsible
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Prepare an action plan information packet to include:

	Included
a. Copy of the needs assessment findings and additional research findings, including an explanation of the need that brought about the formation of the group	☐
b. List of group members	☐
c. Copy of the action plan	☐
d. Copies of letters and resolutions of support of the plan	☐

	Yes	No
4. Does successful implementation of the action plan depend on elected or appointed government bodies taking specific action as recommended by the group?	☐	☐

If yes, which ones?

	Check
Local school board	☐
City council	☐
Board of supervisors	☐
Juvenile justice commission	☐
Park and recreation commission	☐
Youth commission	☐
Other (Identify) _____	☐

_____

5. These procedures should be followed in seeking action by government bodies:

Done

a. Decide who (one or more persons) will be the most appropriate representative(s) to contact the target body. ☐

_____

b. Request time on a meeting agenda, making sure the most strategic meeting date is selected. (Ensure that you allow enough lead time for successfully arranging to have other group members present.) ☐

c. At time of presentation, have on hand enough copies of the action plan information packet (see procedure 3, page 13) for each member of the target body and the press (having notified the media of your presentation). ☐

d. Make a concise presentation of the group's findings and recommendations. Be specific as to what the target body is to do. ☐

e. State that the group will follow up to determine whether and how the recommendation(s) has been implemented. ☐

f. If the recommendation(s) is rejected, get reasons. Do whatever is necessary and appropriate to explore and counter these reasons. Keep trying. ☐

[redacted]

6. Designate members to serve as public spokespersons for the group. They should be available to make presentations at civic and community organizations, respond to media inquiries, and the like. ☐

7. Communicate with the media:

a. Arrange for guest appearances on news and public affairs programs. ☐

b. Keep a continual flow of information to the public through news releases and letters to the editors in local papers. ☐

Yes No

8. Has the evaluation plan, implemented along with the action plan, as described in Step 3, procedure 7, been completed? ☐ ☐

9. After working with the action plan, does the group need additional information and ideas? ☐ ☐

If yes, utilize the resources listed in Step 1, procedure 2.

Done

10. Monitor progress of the action plan by having an agreed-upon method by which those responsible for the various components of the plan report progress. Include in progress reports changes noted in such things as attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge. ☐

Call a meeting of the group on the report-back date to review what has happened to the action plan. Review:

Reviewed

Time and funds spent ☐

_____

Difficulties encountered ☐

_____

_____

Reviewed

Successful experiences ☐

_____

_____

Done

11. Reassess goals, objectives, and procedures periodically, based on the evaluation. Be flexible. ☐
12. Modify action plan as necessary, and submit modified action plan to appropriate private or public governmental body. ☐
13. Continue to monitor for implementation, and repeat this process if necessary to reach desired goal. ☐

Final Check

Final Check for Implementing and Evaluating Plan of Action

- What did we do?

_____

_____

_____

- How did we do it?

_____

_____

_____

- How do we feel about it?

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX A

An Example of Identifying a Problem and the Need for Establishing a Program

1 Conducting a Needs Assessment of the School and Community

Developing a needs assessment of the school and the community should be the first step in exploring a community concern. This assessment can be conducted by the PTA or by any concerned group of parents, teachers, students, religious leaders, or other interested members of the community.

Purpose

Purpose for Conducting a Needs Assessment

In view of the increased number of early teenage pregnancies, the school and community may wish to develop a prevention program to help alleviate this problem. If our effort is to prevent early teenage pregnancy on a large scale, we must involve all segments of society: families, churches, schools, community agencies, and others. The coordination and evaluation of information among such groups are critical if we hope to relieve the problem. The school and community must agree on specific criteria for establishing and evaluating programs that will help them address the problems associated with early teenage pregnancy.

A needs assessment is the first step in the process; organizing the community, developing an action plan, and implementing and evaluating a prevention program are the steps that will follow.

This information is offered as a basis for the development of an action plan to address the problem of early teenage pregnancy. Though the statistics outlined may not reflect that of a local community, they still provide validity for the magnitude of the problem. Each local community should be encouraged to develop its own needs assessment to ensure program ownership. The assessment may be used as the first step in the process of program planning and may likewise be used for the development of any program which addresses the needs statement.

Procedures **Procedures for Conducting a Needs Assessment**

1. Determine the extent of the problem.

	Yes	No
a. Is there a problem?	☑	☐
Is it widespread?	☑	☐
Is the community at large affected by this problem?	☑	☐

b. Who is affected by the problem?

What individuals? *Teenage mother, infant, teenage father*

In what ways? *Effects on the teenage mother: Recent studies indicate that unusual health and medical problems can be found in the pregnancy of an adolescent under the age of sixteen. Since a mother that young is still growing and developing, both she and her infant face significant medical risks--toxemia, prematurity, perinatal infant mortality.*

The mother under sixteen years of age is more likely than the mother aged twenty to twenty-four to suffer anemia during her pregnancy.

She typically receives poor prenatal care, initiating it too late.

She is more likely to start labor prematurely and to have a prolonged and difficult labor, multiplying the hazards to her and to her baby.

Her pregnancy can be expected to exact a greater toll on her nutritional well-being, both during and after pregnancy.

When a student becomes pregnant, she is likely to drop-out of school and fail to obtain vocational training and social skills needed for employment.

If employed, the teenage mother must give up her job, at least for a short time, and frequently becomes dependent on public welfare for her livelihood.

The teenage mother is poorly prepared to cope with the demands of family life and, in particular, with the responsibilities of parenthood. Child abuse results from feelings of failure and frustration. Suicide attempt rates are ten times higher for teenage mothers as compared with the general adolescent population.

Effects on the infant:

A baby born to a mother under sixteen is three times more likely than the child of a mother aged twenty to twenty-four to die in the first year of life.

This baby is more than twice as likely to be born weighing less than 5½ pounds, a birth weight that carries with it predictable, often serious, health problems.

Babies born to women under fifteen years of age have three times the number of brain and nervous system disorders of children born to women older than fifteen.

Effects on the teenage father:

If the teenage father assumes the responsibility for the care and provision of financial support, he may be forced to give up or change his career plans for an indefinite period of time. This often results in hostility and resentment toward the mother and child.

What groups? *New family unit, parents and siblings of teenage parents, schools, the community at large.*

In what ways? *New family unit: When teenagers marry following a pregnancy, their problems seldom decrease. Both teenage parents have difficulties completing school. Teenage parents often are isolated from their peers and from a normal social life and become depressed, defeated, and dependent.*

Half of all teenage marriages end in divorce within five years.

When teenage parents do not marry, they often become trapped in a self-destructive cycle. The results are frequently a failure to continue their education, dependence on others for support, failure in relationships, and repeated pregnancies.

Family:

Effects on the families of the teenage mother and the teenage father frequently involve family disruption, guilt, alienation, emotional stress, financial problems, and divorce.

Schools:

Eighty percent of pregnant teenagers seventeen years and younger do not complete high school. Ninety percent of pregnant teenagers fifteen years and younger do not complete high school.

Community:

The problems associated with early teenage pregnancy affect mental health, social welfare, medical, legal, financial, educational, religious, and governmental institutions. The community is called upon to provide increased services for pregnancy prevention and for pregnant minors and their children. The increased costs for these programs must then be assumed by the community at large.

c. What are the contributing causes of the problem?

Need for love and affection, peer pressure, ignorance, possibility of financial support, lack of parental or adult guidance

d. Do any existing school and community programs deal with this problem? Yes ☑ No ☐

Which ones? *There are some programs in schools dealing with pregnant minors. These programs vary from school to school and are dependent on the instructor and amount of support from administration and community. There are also a number of community programs addressing the problem (e.g., pregnant minors programs, health clinics, crisis clinics, March of Dimes, etc.); however, the agencies are frequently not aware of the services provided by the other groups. Potential users of the services also are not always aware of their availability.*

e. What types of changes could cause things to be different:

Beliefs? *Increased parent education. Parents seem concerned about the problem, and some parents feel that they--not the schools--should be the ones to educate their own children.*

Attitudes? *National, state, and local media influence attitudes .*

Circumstances? *Increase in community concern, the extent of parental involvement, and in the number of educational programs.*

Laws? *Strengthening of the laws related to child care services, services to teenagers, parenting education, career counseling, and guidance would affect the incidence of early teenage pregnancy.*

Time? _____

Money? *Severe budget cuts would have an adverse effect on development of programs designed to meet the needs of youth.*

Other resources? *Increased coordination among the local agencies and community groups already involved.*

2. Survey appropriate community agencies to obtain statistics on the problem: Done ☑

	Surveyed
Private and church-related programs	☑
School personnel	☑
Major employers	☐
Chamber of commerce	☐
Local, county, state, and federal departments of health, education, probation, and social services	☑
Libraries	☑
Volunteer agencies	☑
Community and state colleges and universities	☐
Community organizations (PTA, League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women [AAUW], etc.)	☑

Professional agency representatives ☑
Community phone information services and other sources that may be appropriate ☐
Others (Identify) ☑

Planned Parenthood and other family planning clinics, social welfare, public health, March of Dimes, Urban League.

3. Prepare a needs assessment findings report. It should contain: Done

a. Reason for study ☑

To determine ways to counteract the increased number of early teenage pregnancies.

b. Statistics obtained (Note the numbers by age, socioeconomic status, racial-ethnic background, or religious affiliation.) ☑

Refer to Procedure 1, pages 17 and 18. Additional information: Each year, more than one million school-age girls, fifteen to nineteen years of age, become pregnant in the United States. Two-thirds of these pregnancies are conceived out of wedlock. In addition, some 30,000 girls younger than fifteen get pregnant annually. More than 600,000 babies are born each year to teenage mothers. In California in 1978, there were 53,000 live births to teenage mothers and 800 live births to girls younger than fifteen.

Nationwide, 94 percent of teenage mothers, whether married or not, keep their babies. The remainder send the baby to live with relatives (2.5 percent) or give the baby up for adoption (3.5 percent). Most teenage pregnancies result in the formation of a new family unit.

The first-born child of a teenage mother faces formidable obstacles at the start of life, but the adverse effects of teenage pregnancies multiply when those mothers have a second child before they reach the age of twenty.

Infant and maternal mortality rates increase with successive births and with short internals between births.

c. Professional resource people who were interviewed during the needs assessment ☑

People interviewed are: educators (administrators, teachers, nurses, counselors), students, clergy, members of the medical profession, parents, public health related agencies, family planning/adoption, social welfare agencies.

d. Other resources used, such as films, periodicals, books, and surveys ☑

PTA Today; Reproductive Health Status of California Teenage Women; A Discussion Paper on School Dropouts; Teenage Pregnancy: Everybody's Problem; Teenage Father (film).

Final Check

Final Check in Conducting a Needs Asssment

- Based on the needs assessment findings, does a problem exist that requires broad based community action? Yes ☑ No ☐

If the decision is made to proceed with a broad based community action program, continue with steps 2, 3, and 4 in this guide.

APPENDIX B

The Question Is on . . . . Committees[1]

Committees are one of the most important working arms of PTA. They contribute by:

- expediting the work of the larger group by working out details;
- offering potential for training leaders;
- giving access to various resources;
- allowing those specifically suited for one field to be involved.

Selecting the Committee

Important considerations to keep in mind are:

- one who has special interest in the topic to be pursued;
- one who has the skills and knowledge needed;
- one who could benefit from the experience; and
- one who has access to needed resources.

The nature of the committee assignment determines whether or not representation should include (A) different opinions or points of view (B) different organizations (C) different geographical locations or a combination of A, B and C (D) alternates.

If a member of a committee is unable to fulfill the assignment, the committee may continue to function since there will still be a majority to act. If the bylaws provide for alternates, the first alternate fills the vacancy and continues on the committee as a regular member in place of the original member.

The Chairman

Responsibility of the chairman is to give leadership so that the group is stimulated into working as a cohesive unit.

Size of Committee

The reason for appointing a committee is the advantage of greater efficiency and flexibility of a smaller group. Size will be determined by the number of people needed to accomplish the purpose.

Instructing the Committee

The purpose should be clearly defined. Responsibilities need to be spelled out: what authority does it have; what are the limitations; how much can it spend; should other committees be involved; are supporting materials available; what date is a report due and to which body.

Committee Operation

There is need for understanding of the generally accepted parliamentary procedures for committee operation, such as:

- use of general consent;
- free discussion;
- shared responsibility;
- leader as a facilitator and a full participant; and
- attention to task accomplishment.

The Chairman's Role

A productive committee is possible when:

- committee members together develop a plan of work;
- meetings are informal;
- everyone participates;
- a "WE" spirit is fostered;
- thinking is stimulated;
- members are interested; and
- decisions are reached.

Agenda

An agenda should be used and given to all committee members. It helps them to know where they can make their greatest contribution.

Minutes

These are generally more detailed than the "action items only" minutes of a regular meeting. Copies should be available for committee members, but need not be for others.

Ex Officio Members

An ex officio member has the same rights and duties as any other member, but is not expected to attend all meetings nor be counted as part of the majority of members required for a quorum.

The Final Report

Reports can be submitted in the following ways:

- in the form of a resolution;
- as a statement;
- as guidelines;
- as a financial proposal; and
- as a recommendation for action by others.

Acting on a Report

Final disposition is the responsibility of the group that authorized its appointment.

Reports may be accepted; approved or adopted; rejected; postponed; returned to committee; or referred. The nature of a report determines how it should be handled.

In Summary

The responsibility of the committee is to recognize the importance of its assignment and to fulfill the assignment to the best of its capabilities.

It is the responsibility of the larger group to recognize that the committee has the time and resources to study an issue in depth. For committee work to be effective, confidence MUST be placed in those elected or appointed to serve. For an association or a large group to act as a committee on all matters is to promote inefficiency and defeat the primary work of the committee concept.

[1] Reprinted from the *California State PTA Bulletin*, Vol. 41, No. 6, February, 1979.

APPENDIX C

A Practical Guide to Coalition Building[1]

Major Premises of Coalition Building

- A coalition need not be a permanent organization, but often is a temporary alliance of groups which may well disband once its stated goals have been accomplished.
- It is important for individual groups to maintain their own identity and autonomy at the same time as they participate in a coalition to pursue larger common objectives.
- Each participating group must be able to perceive its own self-interest in taking part in the coalition as a means of achieving goals collectively which it would be unable to achieve on its own.
- A successful coalition does not require total consensus in every area before it can take action.
- Organizations joining a coalition do so on a basis of equality; there should be a concerted effort to strike a balance in types of groups to encourage an atmosphere of openness and avoid exclusiveness of domination by any one particular type of group.
- Participants must be willing to accept and deal with differences in values, attitudes, and communications styles as qualities inherent to a coalition.
- Internal group conflict is inevitable, should be anticipated, and should be treated constructively as part of the process of coalition building.
- Negotiating and bargaining are basic to the successful functioning of any coalition.
- Reasonable short-term and long-term goals and priorities should be clearly defined in such a way that participants perceive the likelihood of being able to achieve at least some of them.

Coalitionists Need to Be Trained to Do the Following:

- Create an environment supportive of differences in attitudes and appearances of the coalition members.
- Appreciate verbal and nonverbal forms of expression based on ethnic, religious, socioeconomic, and other differences.
- Be "tuned in" to subtle signs of disaffection or lack of participation that may be directly related to group differences.
- Help others discuss negative stereotypes in a nonthreatening atmosphere that provides constructive feedback.
- Be alert to potential internal conflict and work to minimize its destructive impact by encouraging a sharing of feelings and a discussion of group differences on values and strategies.

Coalition Leadership Is Most Effective When It:

- Stimulates the development of internal group leadership and, at the same time, is able to develop an appropriate leadership style based on a careful analysis of the needs and resources of the participants.
- Recognizes the different personality types and leadership styles within the coalition.
- Helps avoid divisive competition while encouraging "creative competition" between subgroups or task forces, both to stimulate the coalition's productivity and to avoid time lags where "nothing is happening."
- Clarifies the potential that a coalition's new power base represents and helps guide the group in developing the best strategies for building on that base.
- Helps the group determine the organizational style it will feel the most comfortable with and which is best suited to achieving the purpose it sets forth.

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[1]Adapted from "An American Jewish Committee Project on Group Life and Ethnic America." New York: Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity, 1976.

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Acknowledgments

Sincere appreciation and grateful acknowledgment are extended to the many persons who reviewed this publication. Inclusion of the names listed below does not necessarily mean approval of the content by these individuals.

Sheila Abdallah
Stockton

Thomas E. Addison
Fresno

Brent Altic
Redding

Pat Arney
Palo Cedro

Geraldine Barbe
Redding

Loreen Behrens
Fresno

Marcene Bolton
Redding

Lyndsay Brown
Sacramento

Mara Clisby
Cerritos

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Ed Duggan
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Louise Dudley
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Jackie Fonken
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Mel Foote
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Sue E. Franklin
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Riverside

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Ethel Gok
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Sue Gould
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Anna Griffin
Fresno

Lillian Holmes
Fresno

Bill Leathy
San Bernardino

Holly Lenroot
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Marie Marcelletti
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Sacramento

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Sacramento

Marcia Meier
Redding

Diane Merten
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Lois Moore
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June Morrison
Hacienda Heights

Barry Mostovoy
Los Angeles

Gretchen Mills
San Marino

Marvin Peterson
Redding

Rev. Dick Pitcher
Fresno

Ernie Poore
Fresno

Teresa Ramirez
Whittier

Em Riggs
Sacramento

Edna Sawtell
Sacramento

Shirl Schmidt
Shasta

John Shive
Fresno

David Taylor
Palo Cedro

Ruth Thomas
Visalia

Freda Thorlaksson
McArthur

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Katherine Weinstein
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